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DE RUEHLS #0916 3351324  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
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FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7485  
INFO RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1408

UNCLAS LUSAKA 000916

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR DRL/IRF JOANNELLA MORALES AND NASREEN BADAT  
DEPT ALSO FOR IO/HR AMY OSTERMEIER AND COLLEEN NEVILLE

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ZAMBIA PREFERS "DEFAMATION OF RELIGIONS" BE  
ADDRESSED IN OTHER VENUES

REF: SECSTATE 122638

¶1. (SBU) On December 1, MFA PermSec Tens Kapoma told Ambassador that Zambia abstained from the Third Committee vote on the combatting defamation of religions resolution in part for "legal reasons," and that the Zambian government (GRZ) will look at whether Zambia can shift to a "No" vote in the upcoming General Assembly. Kapoma reiterated that the GRZ preferred such issues be addressed in the Human Rights Commission, and noted previous agreements between the United States and Egypt on similar issues in that body. Kapoma lamented that the Third Committee did not consider a "less controversial" resolution.

¶2. (SBU) Poloff also delivered the non-paper mentioned in reftel to Anne Mtamboh, Director of the MFA's International Organizations department, and requested that the GRZ refer to the points raised when deciding how it will vote in the General Assembly.

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